

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 /026 W

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R 110855 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9991

INFO CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

S E C R E T SAIGON 6130

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y -- MRN 6130 VICE 1630 --

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR VS

SUBJ: GENERAL HAIG'S CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. GENERAL HAIG PAID COURTESY CALL ON PRIME MINISTER KHIEM MORNING OF 11 APRIL IN THE COURSE OF WHICH HE REVIEWED VERY BRIEFLY THE IMPRESSIONS HE HAD GAINED OF THE SITUATION IN INDOCHINA DURING HIS SHORT STOPS IN BANGKOK, VIENTIANE AND PHNOM PENH.
 2. GENERAL HAIG THANKED THE PRIME MINISTER FOR RECEIVING HIM AND EXPLAINED THAT THE PRINCIPAL PURPOSE OF HIS TRIP WAS TO OBTAIN A FIRST HAND IMPRESSION OF THE SITUATION IN CAMBODIA . HE NOTED THAT HE HAD ALSO VISITED BANGKOK AND VIENTIANE. IN BANGKOK THE RTG WAS VERY SKEPTICAL REGARDING THE LIKELIHOOD OF ENDURING PEACE FOLLOWING THE SIGNING OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT. . IN LAOS THE CEASEFIRE APPEARS TO BE CORRECTLY IMPLEMENTED BY BOTH SIDES, BUT THE ENEMY HAS USED THE TIME SINCE THE CEASEFIRE TO IMPROVE IS POSITION AND IN RECENT DAYS HAS OVERRUN SEVERAL OUTPOSTS.
 3. GENERAL HAIG DESCRIBED THE SITUATION IN CAMBODIA AS " SERIOUS".
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HE SAID HE HAD SUGGESTED TO LON NOL THAT HE BROADEN THE BASE OF HIS GOVERNMENT AND TAKE STEPS TO CURB THE ACTIVITIES OF LON NOM. HE NOTED THAT ALTHOUGH THE MILITARY SITUATION APPEARED TO BE VERY BAD, THE LACK OF FRIENDLY CASUALTIES INDICATED THAT MILITARY ACTIVITY WAS IN FACT AT A VERY LOW LEVEL. GENERAL HAIG EMPHASIZED THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH THE USG VIEWED THE SITUATION IN CAMBODIA AND STRESSED US DETERMINATION TO STABILIZE THE SITUATION THERE.

4. GENERAL HAIG EXPRESSED WASHINGTON' S APPRECIATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS WITH WHICH THE GVN HAD HANDLED MANY SERIOUS PROBLEMS SINCE THE CEASEFIRE. HE SUGGESTED THAT THE GVN COULD BEST CONTRIBUTE TO ALLEVIATING THE SITUATION IN CAMBODIA BY DOING ALL IT COULD TO ASURE THE SECURITY OF PHNOM PENH BOUND CONVOYS. HE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE GVN WOULD CLEAR THE BANKS OF THE MEKONG IN THE TAN CHAU AREA AND ESTABLISH CLEAR LINES OF COMMAND AND CONTROL OVER THE CONVOY ITSELF.

5. GENERAL HAIG NOTED THAT THE ENEMY APPEARED TO BE DEVOID OF GOOD INTENTIONS AT THIS TIME BUT THAT THE USG WOULD INSIST ON

COMPLIANCE WITH THE AGREEMENT.

6. MINISTER KHIEM THANKED GENERAL HAIG FOR HIS VISIT AND AGREED THAT THE GVN SHOULD DO ITS UTMOST TO PROTECT THE CONVOYS. HE OPINED THAT THE WAR IN LAOS, CAMBODIA AND VIETNAM SHOULD BE VIEWED AS A WHOLE, AND THAT EACH GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE STEPS WHICH WOULD BE HELPFUL TO THE OTHERS.

7. TURNING TO THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN CAMBODIA HE MADE A PARALLEL BETWEEN THE OVERTHROW OF BAO DAI BY DIEM AND THE OVERTHROW OF SIHANOUK BY LON NOL. HE RECALLED THE SUCCESSION OF COUPS WHICH HAD FOLLOWED THE OVERTHROW OF DIEM AND SUGGESTED THAT EVERYTHING BE DONE TO MAINTAIN LON NOL IN APPARENT CONTROL, EVEN IF AUTHORITY WERE DELEGATED TO OTHERS.

WHITEHOUSE

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